DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 718 EC 212 781

AUTHOR Kalyan-Masih, V.; And Others
TITLE Loneliness, Coping Strategies, and Cognitive Styles of the Rural Gifted.
PUB DATE Aug 88
NOTE 22p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Cognitive Style; *Coping; Emotional Adjustment; Emotional Response; *Gifted; Helplessness; Interpersonal Relationship; *Loneliness; Psychological Patterns; Social Isolation

ABSTRACT

An exploratory study investigated the relationship between loneliness, coping strategies, and cognitive styles in a sample of 52 gifted students from rural Nebraska (mean age 17.25 years). Assessment measures consisted of the Woodward Loneliness Inventory, the Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I, and the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT), which assessed cognitive style. Results indicated that this group felt most lonely when rejected, alienated, helpless, and isolated, but less lonely in company or "on special occasions." Coping strategies most frequently used were individual pursuits, social contacts, cognitive reframing, and physical activities. Religion, help from adults, and negative escapes were less frequently cited. Students who scored below the mean on the GEFT had higher mean loneliness scores on five factors, but significant scores on only one (helplessness). The low GEFT group had higher mean coping scores on five factors, but significant only on religion. The high GEFT group was higher on cognitive reframing, but significant only on the use of individual pursuits. Low GEFT/field dependent students relied on external supports for reducing loneliness, but high GEFT/field independent students seemed to rely more on their own internal resources. References and four tables are appended. (JW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED306718

Loneliness, Coping Strategies, and Cognitive Styles of the Rural Gifted

V. Kalyan-Masih, J. Woodward, and A. Polymenopoulas
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

All humans regardless of age, sex, talent, race, religion or socioeconomic status experience loneliness some time in their life time. It is said that this is the price of being human. It is a fact of life like birth and death. Poets, philosophers, theologians and psychologists have grappled with questions such as: What is loneliness? Why do some cope with loneliness more effectively than others and what coping strategies are used?

"Loneliness is a feeling of being alone and disconnected or alienated from positive persons, places, or things" (Woodward, 1988, p. 4). It is a subjective, unpleasant, and distressful experience. Individuals try to reduce this unpleasant feeling by different coping mechanisms according to their own style of dealing with reality.

Solitude is different from loneliness. It is solitude when a deliberate choice is made to be alone for reflection, meditation, or for some purposeful activity. Unlike loneliness, solitude may have positive, pleasant and creative connotations. Many times it is a self-imposed temporary isolation for a purpose. Solitude is to be alone with one's own self, usually by one's own choice, for a self-defined purpose. One may be very lonely in a crowd of people and not lonely at all in solitude.

Many people cope with loneliness in a positive way and lead wholesome lives; others cope negatively and live an unproductive life which may include drugs, alcohol and suicidal thoughts. In any society, therefore, we need an emphasis on how to deal with

EC 213781

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY V. Kalyan-Masih TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

one's loneliness in a constructive way. Some recent studies, using a cognitive approach have focused on "reframing" or changing the client's perception of loneliness as a way of coping with it. Conoley and Garber (1985) studied the effects of reframing (experiencing loneliness more positively) and self control directives (encouraging subjects to overcome feelings of loneliness).

Cognitive style refers to the typical way an individual interprets reality and derives meaning from it. There are many cognitive style models. Witkin's model of field independence and field dependence cognitive styles was selected for this study.

> "We have designated the tendency to function with relative autonomy of external referents in information processing as a field independent cognitive style and the tendency to place greater emphasis on external referents as a field dependent cognitive style" (Dasen, Berry, and Witkin 1979, p. 72).

In general, field independent people are more self reliant and autonomous; and, field dependent people, more sensitive to other human beings and rely more on interpersonal relationships. It is obvious that investigating the relationship among loneliness, coping strategies, and cognitive styles of the rural gifted is a very important issue.

Giftedness has many dimensions. We are now beginning to emphasize the personality, behavioral, and affective components of giftedness. Roeper (1982) investigated how the gifted coped with their emotions and identified them as: the perfectionist, the child/adult, competitive winner, highly critical of self, and the well-integrated. Betts and Neihart (1988) identified six profiles of the gifted on the basis of behavior, feeling, and needs: 1. the successful, 2. the divergently gifted, 3. the

underground (mostly gifted females who hide their talents), 4. the dropouts (academic failures and social misfits), 5. the double labeled (the handicapped and learning disabled-gifted), and 6. the autonomous learner. Kaiser, and Berndt (1985) found that loneliness in gifted adolescents is characterized by frustrated dependency; alienation; and insufficient love, understanding, or recognition; and inadequate social support.

An exploratory study[1] was, therefore, undertaken to investigate loneliness, coping strategies and relative cognitive styles of selected rural gifted students. This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the incidence and extent of loneliness among a selected group of rural gifted students?
2. What coping strategies do the rural gifted use to deal with loneliness?
3. Does having a particular cognitive style make a difference in how lonely one feels or what coping strategies one uses?

Method

Subjects

The sample consisted of selected gifted students from schools in rural Nebraska. For counselling and assessment purposes, about 10-12 gifted students from schools in rural Nebraska were referred weekly to the Guidance Laboratory for Gifted and Talented Students, Department of Educational

[1] This study is part of a research project, financed by the Agricultural Research Division, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska. Some findings will be presented at the 5th Australian Developmental Conference co-sponsored by the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Sydney, Australia, September 1988.

Psychology, at the University of Nebraska[2]. The rural schools outside Lincoln, Nebraska selected the gifted on the basis of high IQ, high academic achievement, leadership qualities, and artistic talent. Fifty-two students were available from this pool of rural gifted students. There were 16 males, and 36 females, ranging in age from 17 to 20 years, with a mean age of 17.25 years. .

Assessment Measures

The assessment measures consisted of: 1. Woodward Loneliness Inventory I; 2. Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I; 3. Group Embedded Figures Test-GEFT (Oltman, Raskin, & Witkin 1971).

1. Woodward Loneliness Inventory I

This self reporting inventory consists of 75 items with Likert-type response categories. The respondent is asked to check one of the response categories "almost always, often, sometimes, rarely, never, does not apply" which best describes his/her feelings of loneliness at a particular time/occasion. The score assigned to these response categories is 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0 respectively. A mean loneliness score of an individual is calculated. The values assigned to response categories (selected by respondent) are summated across 75 items. This sum is then divided by 75 or 75 minus the number of items not marked or checked as "not applicable." The Loneliness Inventory has a reliability of .96 (Cronback Alpha) and a criterion validity of .97 found by correlating the scores on the Woodward Loneliness Inventory I

[2] The authors are grateful to Dr. Santmire, Chair, Department of Educational Psychology, UNL, for permission to work with the Gifted in this Lab. Thanks are also due to Ms. Roberta Meyers, Director, UNL Guidance Lab for Gifted and Talented, for help and cooperation in sample and data collection.

with raw scores on another self-rating six-level measure of loneliness. It was also correlated with the revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980) and the correlation coefficient was .37 significant at the .001 level (Woodward, 1988). Construct validity of the Inventory was also established by factor analysis. Varimax rotated factor analysis identified six factors:

1. Lack of ability or control; 2. Being alienated from positive persons, places, or things; 3. Self pity, rejection, lack of purpose; 4. Being with others (in a crowd); 5. Special occasions; and 6. Isolation.

Woodward's Inventory I has been used in Nebraska since 1967 with different samples. Woodward supervised 15 theses on loneliness. The populations investigated included: divorced individuals (Zabel, 1970); housewives (Visser, 1971); never-married individuals (Swanson, 1971); older individuals (Woodward, 1971); college students (Seevers, 1972); rural high school students (Otto, 1973); low income single-parent mothers (Joern, 1973); older adults in nursing homes (Wythers, 1974); preschool children (Travis, 1975); adolescents with physical impairments (Gladback, 1976); hemophiliacs (Donlan, 1978); single-parent adolescent mothers (Bauermeister, 1978); elderly American Indians (Luck, 1979); the older urban widows (Hornung, 1980); and alcoholics (Medora, 1983).

2. Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I

A preliminary version of the inventory consisted of 42 items describing what one might do to cope with loneliness. These

items consisted of Likert-type response categories of "always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never", which were assigned numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Some of the coping strategies were derived from research literature. For example, Rubenstein and Shaver (1982) found four main types of responses to loneliness: 1. Sad Passivity, 2. Active Solitude, 3. Spending Money, and 4. Social Contact. Peplau and Perlman (1982) summarized various coping strategies in three groups:
Changing/improving/enlarging one's network of social activities; Selecting hobbies or enjoyable activities; and Reframing or self control. The reliability of Coping Inventory I ranged from .80-.81 (Cronbach Alpha) and a test-retest reliability after six weeks ranged from .85 to .90. Data were further subjected to factor analysis. A scree plot of eigenvalues suggested retaining seven factors. These were: 1. Religious or good samaritan activities, 2. Keeping busy/physical activities, 3. Social activities, 4. Cognitive reframing, 5. Seeking new relationships, 6. Negative escape routes, and 7. Individual pursuits.

3. Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT)
This is a standardized instrument by Witkin and associates, to assess field independent/field dependent cognitive styles. It has a reliability coefficient of .83 - .93 and a validity of .71 - .85. The raw scores range from 0-18. GEFT is derived from Witkin's model of field independent/field dependent cognitive styles.

Data Collection

In the Spring of 1986, Woodward Inventory I and Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I were mailed to 52 students selected from the pool of gifted students from rural Nebraska referred to the Laboratory for Gifted and Talented Students, at UNL. They were also administered GEFT in a scheduled group session.

Results

To answer question #1 - What is the extent of loneliness among gifted students - scores on Woodward Loneliness Inventory I were examined.

Forty-nine students out of 52 completed and returned the Woodward Loneliness Inventory I. The mean loneliness score for the total sample was 2.60. Twenty five or 51% of these students had a mean loneliness score greater than 2.60. Fifteen students had a mean loneliness score ranging from 3.01 - 3.87 indicating that loneliness was "often" experienced. Five students reported being "rarely" or "never" lonely as indicated by their mean score of 1.15 - 2.00. The remaining 29, reported experiencing loneliness "sometimes", with a mean loneliness score ranging from 2.13 - 3.00. Thus, it is noted that 31 percent of students in this sample reported as being "very" lonely; 10 percent "rarely" or "never" lonely; and 59 percent were "sometimes" lonely.

Insert Table 1 about here

Another way of looking at the extent of loneliness experienced by this group is by examining the means of factor scores. For example, Factor 6 or Isolation loads on items 20, 34, 57, and 62. The mean score for the sample on Factor 6 would be the summated values of response categories on items 20, 34, 57 and 62 across the sample divided by n, where n=49.

Means of 6 factor scores in Table 1 were examined. Taking the group mean loneliness score of 2.60 as the cut off point loneliness factors above and below the mean were examined. It was found that these gifted students felt most lonely when they were rejected (Factor 3 with a mean of 3.33); or alienated from positive persons, places or things (Factor 2 with a mean of 2.88); or when they felt helpless and not in control of a situation (Factor 1 with a mean of 2.60); or when they were isolated (Factor 6 with a mean of 2.59). They felt less lonely when they were with others or when they celebrated special occasions (Factors 4 and 5 with means of 2.39 and 1.79).

To answer question 2 -- What coping strategies do these students use more frequently, factor scores on the Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I were examined. All of the 52 students completed and returned the Inventory.

The mean Coping factor score was obtained by summating the values of response categories of items on which a particular factor loaded and dividing this summated sum by n, where n=52. Table 3 shows these mean coping factor scores and their standard deviations.

Insert Table 2 about here

Using the group mean of 2.82 as the cut off point, coping strategies above and below this group mean were examined. Coping strategies more frequently used were: engaging in individual pursuits (Factor 7 with a mean of 3.10); extending social contacts (Factor 3 with a mean of 3.04); using cognitive reframing (Factor 4 with a mean of 3.02); and keeping busy with physical activities (Factor 2 with a mean of 2.95). Less frequently used coping strategies were: seeking help from adults

or counselors, (Factor 5 with a mean of 2.52); and using negative escape routes (Factor 6 with a mean of 2.42). Thus it can be seen that these gifted students used several different coping strategies.

To answer question #3 -- Does having a particular cognitive style make a difference in how lonely one feels or what coping strategies one uses -- the scores on the GEFT were examined.

Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) assesses the Field Independent/Field Dependent dimension of cognitive styles within Witkin's theory. A higher score reflects Field Independent and a low score, Field Dependent style. The GEFT score range for this group was 8-18, with a mean of 15.33 and a sd. of 3.13. The mean GEFT score for men and women in the general population is 12.0 and 10.8 respectively (Witkin et al 1971, p. 28).

The sample was further subdivided into two groups: High GEFT group with a score of 16 or above, and low GEFT group with a score of 15 or below on the GEFT.

Mean factor scores on the Woodward Loneliness Inventory I for the High and Low GEFT groups are given in Table 4. A one-way ANOVA was done to test significant differences between the two groups.

Insert Table 3 about here

By examining the mean Loneliness factor scores of Low and High GEFT groups in Table 4, several things were noted. Firstly, the low GEFT group had higher mean scores on all but one factor, that was, on factor 4 -- Being with others. Secondly, the low GEFT group was significantly differentiated from the high GEFT on loneliness factors 1 and 5. The low GEFT gifted students felt significantly more helpless and unable to be in control of a

situation than the high GEFT gifted: $F_{1,44} = 2.68$, $p<.08$. Also, the low GEFT group felt significantly more lonely than the high GEFT group on special occasions such as on Birthdays or on Christmas: $F_{1,44} = 2.89$, $p<.02$. Thirdly, in general, the low GEFT group of gifted students felt more lonely when alienated, rejected, and isolated. The trend was clear, even though the mean factor score differences were not significant. In other words, the low GEFT gifted group needed others for not experiencing loneliness. The high GEFT gifted group, on the contrary, seemed to experience loneliness in the company of others. The mean score on Factor 4-Being with others, was 2.13 for the High GEFT group in contrast with the mean score of 2.30 for the Low GEFT group. The difference was not significant, but the trend was quite clear: The High GEFT group might be lonely in a crowd, but the Low GEFT was lonely without a crowd.

The same subgroups -- High GEFT and Low GEFT -- were used for analyzing the Factor scores on the Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I. Table 5 summarizes the mean coping factor scores.

Insert Table 4 here

A visual analysis of table 4 shows a pattern emerging as to which of the coping strategies were preferred by the High and Low GEFT groups. The Low GEFT group had slightly higher mean coping factor scores on Factors 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Coping strategies represented by these five factors imply reliance on others or on external sources of support. The High GEFT group had higher mean factor scores on Factors 4 and 7. Coping strategies represented by these two factors suggested reliance on one's own internal resources for solving a problem. This does not imply that these two groups used exclusively either one or the other coping

strategy. But it is suggested that there was a slight difference in the expressed preference for the use of coping strategies as indicated by the means of the High GEFT and Low GEFT groups.

Even though the mean factor scores of Low GEFT and High GEFT groups showed a consistent pattern of using different kinds of coping strategies, only two of these mean factor scores differentiated significantly the two groups on a one-way ANOVA. The Low GEFT group used reliance on religion and someone else, more than the High GEFT group: $F_{1,\ 44}=2.56$, $p<.10$. The high GEFT gifted group used F_7 or individual pursuits more significantly than the low GEFT group: $F_{1,\ 44}=3.20$, $p<.10$.

Conclusion

This exploratory study investigated loneliness, coping strategies, and cognitive styles of selected gifted students from rural schools in Nebraska. The mean loneliness score on Woodward Loneliness Inventory I was 2.60 and 51% of the group was above the mean. Thirty one percent indicated that they were "very lonely" ($\bar{x}=3.01-3.87$) and only 10%, "rarely" or "never lonely" ($\bar{x}=1.15-2.00$). The mean lonely scores of some in rank order of the different groups studied by Woodward and his students in Nebraska are as follows:

Research Group	Mean Loneliness Score
Senior high school girls (urban)	2.99
Rural Nebraska Adolescents	2.74
*Rural Gifted of this study	2.60
Rural Nebraska adults	2.36
Freshmen and senior class girls in rural high schools	2.11
Low-income single adolescent mothers	2.06
Freshmen and senior class students in rural high schools	1.89

A visual analysis of this ranking shows that the rural gifted students of this study are a very "lonely" group in comparison with others. They feel more lonely when rejected; or alienated from positive persons, places, or things; when they feel helpless and are not in control of a situation; or when they are isolated.

The Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I was used to identify what coping strategies were preferred by this group when lonely. The coping strategies most frequently used were: engaging in individual pursuits; extending social contacts; using cognitive reframing; or keeping busy. Less frequently used coping strategies were: seeking help from adults or counselors; or using negative escape routes.

The Cognitive Style was defined as field independent or field dependent within Witkin's model and was assessed by Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT). Those scoring 16 or above formed the High GEFT group and those scoring 15 or below formed the Low GEFT group. The loneliness and coping factor scores for these two subgroups were further examined via one-way ANOVA. A visual

analysis of Table 4 suggests that the Low GEFT group had higher mean loneliness scores on all but one factor, that is, Being with others. In other words, the Low GEFT group was less lonely when with others and significantly more lonely on special occasions or in situations unable to handle or control. If the High GEFT group is interpreted as being Field Independent, then a slight trend towards their using those coping strategies that imply more self reliance, autonomy, or support from their own internal resources is noted. Coping strategies that reflect this are cognitive reframing (changing one's attitude or perception of a situation to a more positive perspective) and engaging in individual pursuits like reading or listening to music. The Low GEFT group or the Field Dependent Group, on the other hand, had a tendency to use those coping strategies that seek external means of support or reliance on others such as, religion, or helping someone else, physical activities, social contacts, and seeking professional help, etc. There is therefore, some support for Witkin's theory that field independent people have a tendency to rely more on their own inner resources, and the field dependent people tend to rely on outside sources or others when coping with a problem or stressful situation. A reflection of this trend among the gifted is noted also.

What can be concluded from this exploratory study? Some of the gifted were "very lonely." This group of gifted selected from rural Nebraska ranked third in their mean loneliness score. Even though they were labelled "gifted" they had human feelings -- they felt lonely when rejected, alienated, isolated or not in control of a situation. They used a variety of coping strategies to deal with their loneliness. But the preferred ones were

"individual pursuits" and "cognitive reframing." Not all those labelled as "Gifted" were highly field independent, but those who were, preferred to use their own inner resources, in contrast with the field dependent who used external support, social contacts, and outside sources for coping with loneliness. These findings have implications for counselling in school, and parent-adolescent relations in home. The sample was limited to rural Nebraska and generalizations to other population groups, may therefore, be limited. There is need, however, to understand the affective component of the "gifted" personality.

REFERENCES

Bauermeister, M. L. (1978). Loneliness among single adolescent mothers. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Betts, George T. & Neihart, M. (1988) Profiles of the gifted and talented. Gifted Child Quarterly, 32(2) 248-253.

Conoley, C. W. & Garber R. A. (1985). Effects of reframing and self-control directives on loneliness, depression, and controllability. Journal of Counselling Psychology, 32(1), 139-142.

Dasen, P. R., Berry, J. W., & Witkin, H. A. (1979) The use of developmental theories crossculturally. In Eckensberger, Lonner and Poortinga (Eds.), Swets, Zeitlinger, B. V., Lisse.

Donlan, J. (1978). Loneliness among hemophiliacs. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Hornung, K. L. (1980). Loneliness among older urban widows. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Joern, J. B. (1973). Loneliness among low-income single-parent mothers. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Kaiser, Charles F., & Berndt, D. J. (1985). Predictors of loneliness in the gifted adolescent. Gifted Quarterly, 29(2) 74-77.

Kalyan-Masih, V. (1985) Cognitive performance and cognitive style. International Journal of Behavioral Development, (8), 39-54.

Kalyan-Masih, V. & Curry, Eileen. (1987) Cognitive performance and cognitive style of young children. Perceptual and Motor Skills, (65) 571-579.

Medora, N. P. (1983). Variables affecting loneliness among individuals undergoing treatment in alcohol rehabilitation centers. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska.

Oltman, Phillip K., Raskin, E., & Witkin, H. A. (1971) Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

Otto, B. W. (1973). Loneliness among freshman and senior class students in selected rural Nebraska public high schools. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Peplau, L. A. & Perlman, D. (1982). Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy. New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Roeper, A. (1982) How the gifted cope with their emotions. Roeper Review, (5) 21-24.

Rubenstein, C. & Shaver, P. (1982). In search of intimacy. New York: Delacorte.

Russell, D., Peplau, L. A., & Cutrona, C. E. (1980). The Readers Digest, 135-138.

Seevers, S. K. (1972). Loneliness and the college student. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Swanson, C. K. (1971). Loneliness as related to the never-married person. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Travis, C. (1975). Loneliness among preschool children. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Visser, M. J. (1971). Loneliness among housewives. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Witkin, H. A., Oltman, P. K., Raskin, E., & Karp, S. E. (1971) Manual: Embedded Figures Test, Children's Embedded Figures Test, and Group Embedded Figures Test. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

Woodward, H. (1971). Loneliness among the elderly. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Woodward, John. (1988). The solitude of loneliness. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, DC Heath and Company.

Wythers, M. R. (1974). Loneliness among residents in homes for the elderly. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Zabel, J. R. (1970). Loneliness and divorce. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Table 1

Means and Sds of Factor Scores

on Woodward Loneliness Inventory I

		Means	Sds
Factor 1.	Lack of Ability or Control (Items: 47, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65) (Factor loadings: .56-.69)	2.60	0.69
Factor 2.	Alienated from Persons, Places, or Things (Items: 1, 2, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 27, 70) (Factor loadings: .58-.73)	2.88	0.64
Factor 3.	Rejection (Items: 30, 32, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45) (Factor loadings: .55-.78)	3.33	0.84
Factor 4.	Being with Others (Items: 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13) (Factor loadings: .50-.81)	2.39	0.61
Factor 5.	Special Occasions (Items: 48, 68, 69, 74, 75) (Factor loadings: .49-.66)	1.79	1.01
Factor 6.	Isolation (Items: 20, 34, 57, 62) (Factor loadings: .38-.66)	2.59	0.61
	For the Total group	2.60	0.61

Table 2

Means and Sds of Factor Scores

On Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory I

		Means	Sds
Factor 1.	Religious/Good Samaritan Activities (Items: 14, 15, 18, 20, 21) (Factor loadings: .22-.79)	2.71	0.65
Factor 2.	Busy/Physical Activities (Items: 1, 12, 13, 17, 19, 27, 28, 29) (Factor loadings: .44-.70)	2.95	0.55
Factor 3.	Social Contacts (Items: 4, 5, 7, 11, 33) (Factor loadings: .21-.69)	3.04	0.60
Factor 4.	Cognitive Reframing (Items: 3, 9, 30, 31, 32, 38, 40, 41) (Factor loadings: .16-.74)	3.02	0.54
Factor 5.	Seek Help (Items: 10, 22, 23, 24, 34, 42) (Factor loadings: .45-.65)	2.52	0.45
Factor 6.	Negative Escape (Items: 8, 25, 26, 39) (Factor loadings: .65-.80)	2.42	0.64
Factor 7.	Individual Pursuits (Items: 2, 6, 16, 35, 36, 37) (Factor loadings: .39-.65)	3.10	0.53
	For the total group	2.82	0.56

Table 3

Mean Loneliness Factor Scores of Low and High GEFT Groups

		Low GEFT	High GEFT
Factor 1.	Lack of Ability/Control	2.68*(.08)	2.49
Factor 2.	Alienated from positive persons/places/things	3.03	2.81
Factor 3.	Rejection	3.36	3.32
Factor 4.	Being with others	2.30	2.43
Factor 5.	Special Occasions	2.89*(.02)	2.36
Factor 6.	Isolation	1.93	1.73

Table 4

Mean Coping Factor Scores of Low and High GEFT Groups

		Low GEFT	High GEFT
Factor 1.	Religious/good Samaritan activities	3.02*(.01)	2.58
Factor 2.	Busy/Physical Activities	3.00	2.92
Factor 3.	Social Contact	3.14	3.00
Factor 4.	Cognitive Reframing	3.02	3.04
Factor 5.	Seek Help	2.59	2.51
Factor 6.	Negative Escape	2.56	2.36
Factor 7.	Individual Pursuits	2.95	3.20*(.10)

Loneliness, Coping Strategies, and Cognitive Styles

V. Kalyan-Masih, John C. Woodward, and A. Polymenopoulas
University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE USA

All human beings experience loneliness. Solitude, however, is choosing to be alone for a self-defined purpose. An exploratory study investigated relationship between loneliness, coping strategies, and cognitive styles. The sample consisted of 52 gifted students from rural Nebraska, with a mean age of 17.25 years. Assessment measures consisted of: 1. Woodward Loneliness Inventory (75 Likert-type items, with six factors, LF_1-LF_6); 2. Kalyan-Masih Coping Inventory (42 Likert-type items, with 7 factors, CF_1-CF_7); and 3. GEFT, to assess Witkins field independent/dependent cognitive styles.

This group felt most lonely when rejected/LF_3; alienated/LF_2; helpless/LF_1; isolated/LT_6, but less lonely in company/LF_4; or "on special occasion"/LF_5. Coping strategies most frequently used were: individual pursuits/CF_7; social contacts/CF_3; cognitive reframing/CF_4; physical activities/CF_2, less frequently used were religion/CF_1; help from adults/CF_5; and negative escapes/CF_6. Further, the high GEFT and low GEFT groups, above and below the GEFT mean, were used in a one-way ANOVA, (2x6LF) and (2x7CF). The low GEFT group had higher mean loneliness scores on five factors, but significant only on LF_1/helplessness, $F=2.86$, $p<.02$. The low GEFT group had higher mean coping scores on five factors but significant only on CF_1/religion, $F=3.02$, $p<.01$. The high GEFT group was higher on CF_4/Cognitive reframing, but significant only on CF_7/individual pursuits, $F=3.20$, $p<.1$.

The low GEFT/field dependent students relied on external supports for reducing loneliness, but high GEFT/field independent students seemed to rely more on their own internal resources, providing tentative support for Witkin's theory.